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**13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)**

Military personnel are seeing a sudden increase in peacekeeping and humanitarian relief missions. These missions have the potential for producing psychological ambiguities surrounding the relevance of the mission to the individual's identity as a soldier, the guidelines for how to behave during the mission, and the degree of control individuals feel they have over their job on the mission. In the present research we examined the beliefs of US Army Europe (USAREUR) soldiers (N=1420) about the Bosnia peace-enforcement mission prior to their deployment. Questions assessing beliefs included how much control soldiers thought they would have on their job, how well-trained they were for their job, how comfortable they felt in the role of peacekeeper, and the importance of peacekeeping operations. We assessed the impact of these beliefs on soldiers' feelings of responsibility, morale, depression, and excitement and worry about the deployment. The results from the soldiers participating in the Bosnia mission were also compared to the predeployment results of USAREUR soldiers (N = 35) participating in a medical humanitarian assistance mission to Kazakstan. The Triangle Model of responsibility (Britt, 1995; Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy & Doherty, 1994) served as the theoretical framework for understanding the impact of soldier beliefs on the psychological outcome variables.

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# Soldier Beliefs About Peacekeeping Operations as Predictors of Depression, Morale, and Responsibility

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Psychological Concerns of the Peacekeeper

- How is this mission relevant to my role as a soldier?

- Are the guidelines for the mission clear?

- Will I experience control over my job?

- Should we be involved in peacekeeping missions?

Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

# Study Rationale

How do beliefs about peacekeeping missions affect depression, morale, and responsibility?

- Most research **assumes** that beliefs about peacekeeping affect psychological health and performance

- The purpose of the present research was to examine how different beliefs about peacekeeping influence:

  - Psychological Health
  - Morale
  - Responsibility

Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

# Survey Overview

- Pre-Deployment to Bosnia

  - U.S. Army Units in Germany
  - Groups Ranging from 10 to 300
  - Wide Range of Units (infantry, signal, medical)

- Partial Sample (N=1859)

  - 87 % Men; 13 % Women
  - 87 % Enlisted; 13% Officers
  - 53 % White; 31% Black; 8% Hispanic
  - 60 % Married; 32% Single

Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

# Predictor Variables

- **Job Clarity** (Triangle Model of responsibility; Britt, 1995; Schlenker et al., 1994). Alpha = .83.

  - "I will be doing what I have been trained to do"
  - "I will have control over my job"
  - "The guidelines for my job will be clear and easy to understand"

- **Peacekeeper Role Adoption** (6 items from Peacekeeping Attitudes Scale). Alpha = .84. Examples:

  - "I feel comfortable in the role of peacekeeper"
  - "I like the 'human side' associated with peacekeeping"
  - "It is important to help countries in need where we can"

- **Functional Concerns about Peacekeeping Operations** (8 items from Peacekeeping Attitudes Scale). Alpha = .81. Examples:

  - "The guidelines for how to act on a peacekeeping mission are too unclear"
  - "Peacekeeping operations mean witnessing tragic incidents without being able to help"
  - "Peacekeeping missions take the 'fighting edge' away from soldiers"

Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

## Outcome Measures

- Depression (Radloff, 1977)
  - Modified 7 Item Scale Assessing Average Number of Depressive Symptoms in the Past Week

- Worry
  - "Worried about the deployment"

- Personal Morale
  - "Your personal morale"

- Responsibility
  - "Feel responsible for my performance during deployment"

Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

# Prediction of Depression, Worry, Morale, and Responsibility

**Depression** (Multiple R = .27)

| Predictor | Beta | T-Value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Job Clarity | -.15 | -6.04 | <.0001 |
| Role Adoption | -.14 | -5.51 | <.0001 |
| Functional Concerns | .08 | 3.22 | <.01 |

**Worry** (Multiple R = .31)

| Predictor | Beta | T-Value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Job Clarity | -.03 | -1.04 | >.20 |
| Role Adoption | -.15 | -5.82 | <.0001 |
| Functional Concerns | .22 | 9.20 | <.0001 |

**Morale** (Multiple R = .50)

| Predictor | Beta | T-Value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Job Clarity | .31 | 13.61 | <.0001 |
| Role Adoption | .26 | 11.35 | <.0001 |
| Functional Concerns | -.09 | -3.82 | <.001 |

**Responsibility** (Multiple R = .39)

| Predictor | Beta | T-Value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Job Clarity | .33 | 13.91 | <.0001 |
| Role Adoption | .16 | 6.50 | <.0001 |
| Functional Concerns | .13 | 5.74 | <.0001 |

## Peacekeeper Beliefs Differ in Their Prediction of the Outcome Measures

Legend: □ Job Clarity ▨ Role Adoption ■ Functional Concerns

Standardized Beta Weight (y-axis): 0.4, 0.3, 0.2, 0.1, 0, -0.1, -0.2

Outcome Measure (x-axis): Depression, Worry, Morale, Responsibility

Depression: 0.08, -0.15, -0.14
Worry: 0.22, -0.03, -0.15
Morale: 0.31, 0.26, -0.08
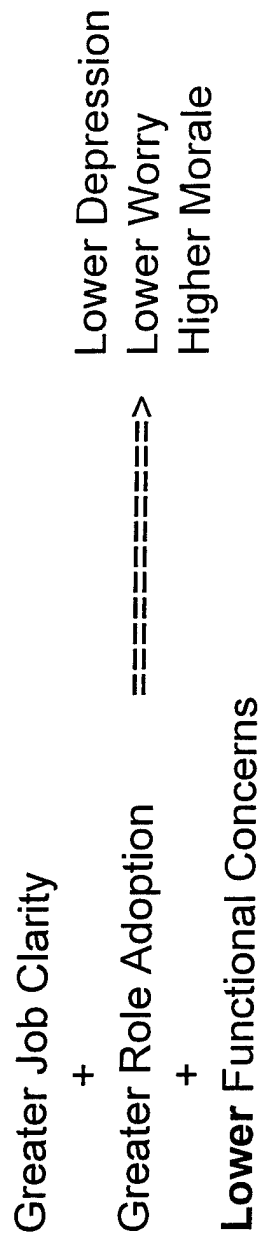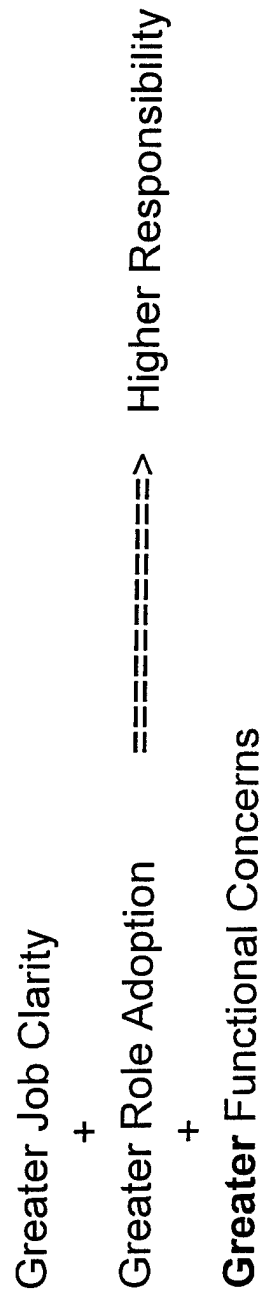Responsibility: 0.33, 0.16, 0.13
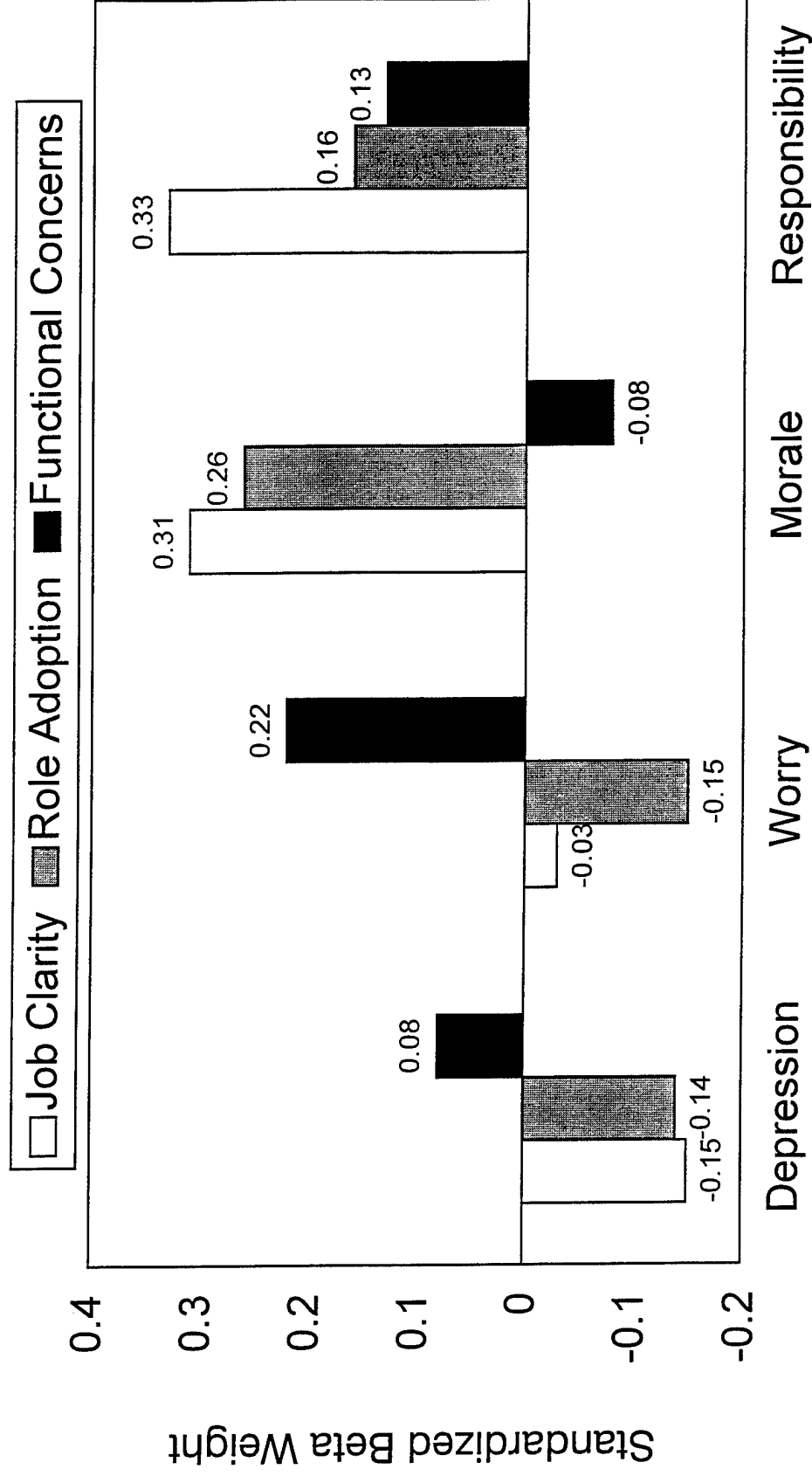
N=1859
Bosnia Pre-deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

# How do Job Clarity, Role Adoption, and Functional Concerns Predict the Outcome Measures?

## Model 1: Depression, Worry, and Morale

Greater Job Clarity

    +

Greater Role Adoption    =========>    Lower Depression

    +    Lower Worry

**Lower** Functional Concerns    Higher Morale

## Model 2: Responsibility

Greater Job Clarity

    +

Greater Role Adoption    =========>    Higher Responsibility

    +

**Greater** Functional Concerns

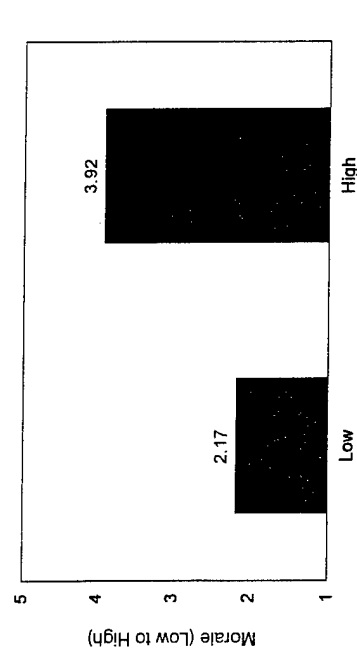Worry as a Function of Peacekeeper Beliefs (Model 1)

Worry (Low to High)

Low 3.69  High 2.67

Peacekeeper Beliefs (Job Clarity & Role Adoption & Functional Concerns)

N=1859
Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E



Responsibility for Job Performance as a Function of Peacekeeper Beliefs (Model 2)

Responsibility (Low to High)

Low 3.2  High 4.51

Peacekeeper Beliefs (Job Clarity & Role Adoption & Functional Concerns)

N=1859
Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E



Depression as a Function of Peacekeeper Beliefs (Model 1)
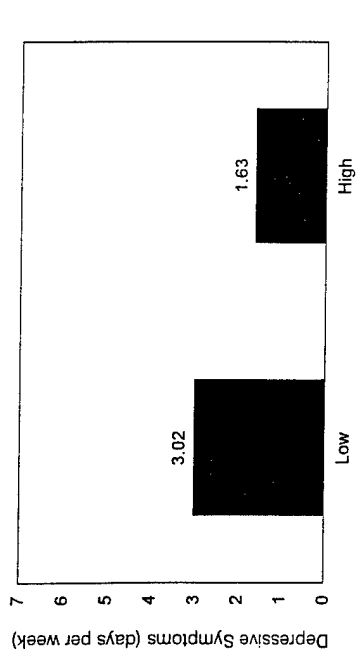
Depressive Symptoms (days per week)
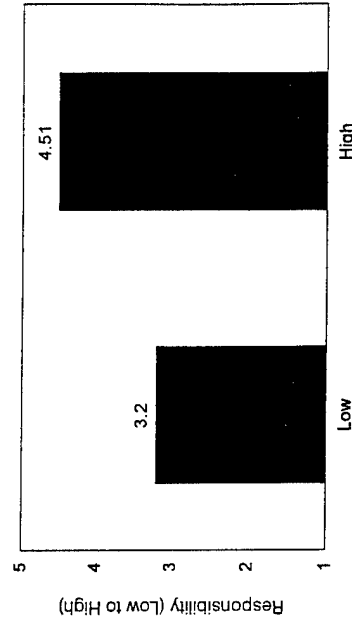
Low 3.02  High 1.63
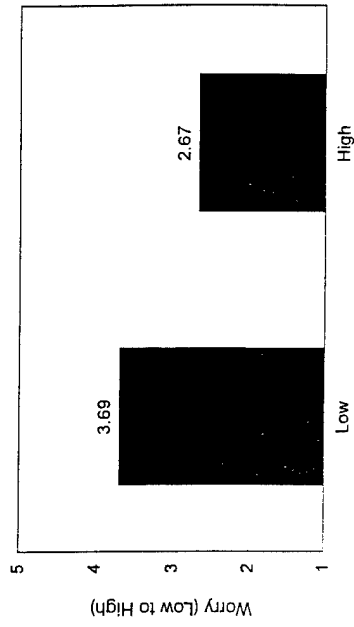
Peacekeeper Beliefs (Job Clarity & Role Adoption & Functional Concerns)

N=1859
Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E



Personal Morale as a Function Peacekeeper Beliefs (Model 1)

Morale (Low to High)

Low 2.17  High 3.92

Peacekeeper Beliefs (Job Clarity & Role Adoption & Functional Concerns)

N=1859
Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E

# Pre-Deployment Beliefs of US Army Soldiers about Peacekeeping (Bosnia) Versus Humanitarian (Kazakstan) Missions
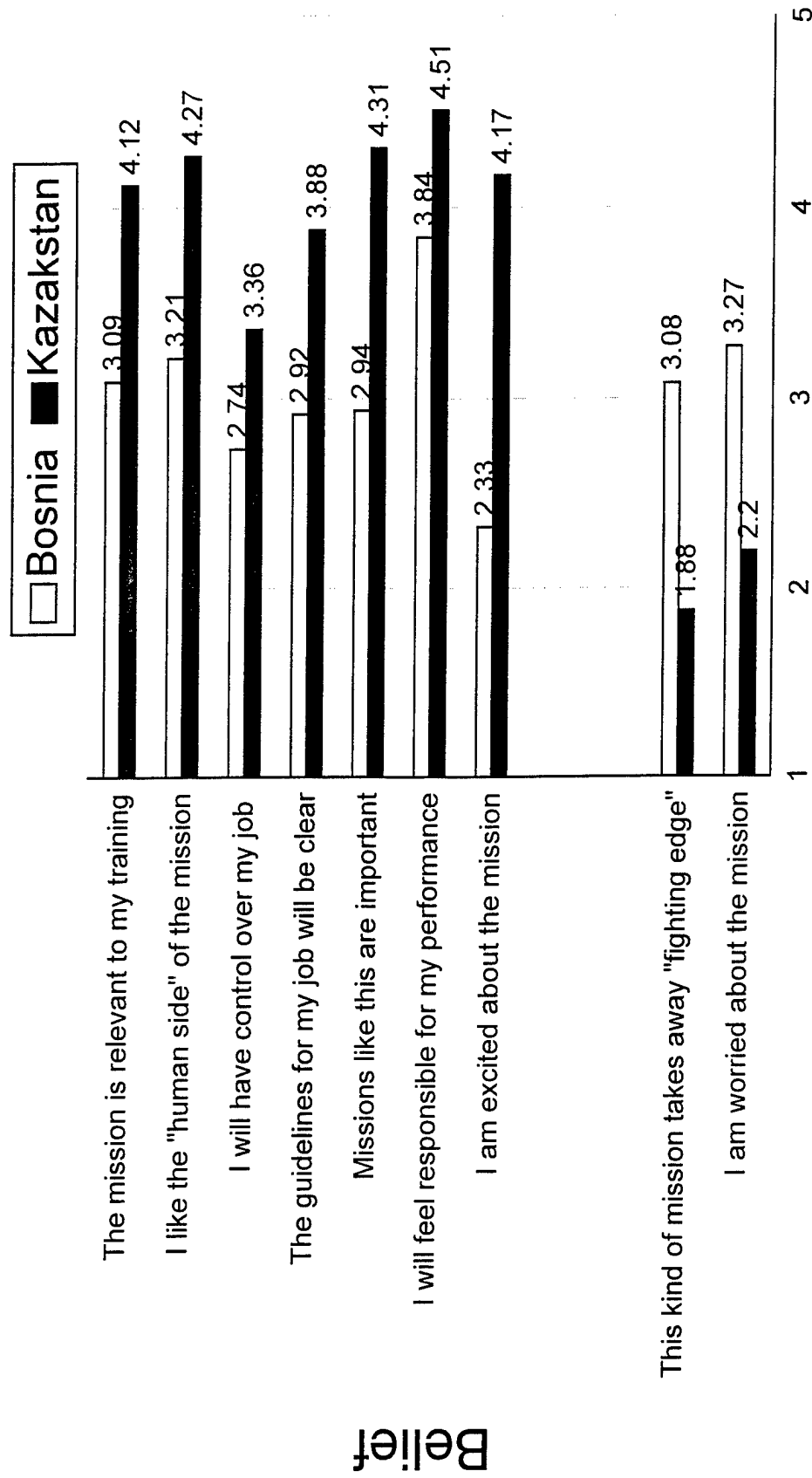


All differences between Bosnia and Kazakstan are statistically significant at $p < .005$

# Conclusions

- Soldiers having the lowest levels of depression and worry, and highest levels of morale:

  - Perceived their job on the mission as more clear and relevant to their training

  - Felt that peacekeeping operations were important and relevant to their role as a soldier

  - Had fewer functional concerns about peacekeeping operations (e.g., that the rules of engagement are more clear)

- Soldiers anticipating feeling highly responsible for their job performance perceived their job as clear and relevant, adopted the role of peacekeeper, but also exhibited a heightened concern over practical considerations during peacekeeping operations

- Implications for focusing pre-deployment efforts

  - Create a clearer link between soldier identity and the peacekeeper role
  - Acknowledge and address functional concerns up front
  - Assure soldiers they will be adequately retrained on necessary "combat" skills
  - Spend additional time on mission rationale (e.g. sell the mission)
  - Set appropriate expectations for what soldiers can accomplish on the mission

Bosnia Pre-Deployment Survey, USAMRU-E